

# OPERAS AND CONCERTS—COMMENTS AND DATES

## Concerts of the Week

**SUNDAY.**—Philharmonic Society, Carnegie, 8 P. M. Maximilian, Rose, violinist, Carnegie, 8:15 P. M. Ania, Fabry, soprano, Aolian, 3 P. M. Marie Mikova, pianist, Princess Theatre, 3 P. M. Edwina Behre, pianist, Garrick Theatre, 8:15 P. M. Opera concert, Metropolitan, 8:30 P. M. John McCormack, Miss Mary Garden and Chicago Orchestra, Hippodrome, 8:15 P. M. Chamber music concert of Music League of People's Institute, Washington Irving High School, 8:15 P. M.

**MONDAY.**—Mrs. Olga Carrara, soprano, Carnegie, 8:15 P. M. Ralph Leopold, pianist, Aolian, 3 P. M. Martha Phillips, song recital, Aolian, 8:15 P. M.

**TUESDAY.**—Mrs. Winetzkaja, song recital, Carnegie, 8:15 P. M. Maurice Dumesnil, pianist, Aolian, 3 P. M. New York Chamber Music Society, Aolian, 8:15 P. M. Mrs. Emma Van de Zande, soprano, Princess Theatre, 8 P. M.

**WEDNESDAY.**—Evening Mall concert, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M. Carmen Pascova, song recital, Aolian Hall, 8 P. M.

**THURSDAY.**—Philharmonic Society, Carnegie, 8:30 P. M. Raymond Wilson, pianist, Aolian, 3 P. M. Harriet Foster, song recital, Aolian, 8:15 P. M.

**FRIDAY.**—Philharmonic Society, 2:30 P. M. Miss Helen Ware, violinist, Aolian, 3 P. M. Richard Buhlig, pianist, Aolian, 8:15 P. M.

**SATURDAY.**—Symphony concert for young people, Carnegie Hall, 2:30 P. M. Philharmonic Society, Carnegie Hall, 8:30 P. M. Pablo Casals, cellist, Aolian Hall, 3 P. M. Abraham Hattowitch, violinist, Aolian Hall, 8:15 P. M. Orchestral concert, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 8 P. M.



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## Chicago Opera Company and Its Shortcomings

By W. J. HENDERSON.

THE visit of the Chicago Opera Company came to a peaceful end last night and now a brief summary of its results may be made.

In five weeks thirty-two operas and three ballets were performed. Of the operas twenty-one were Italian, ten were French and one was American. One of the French operas was sung in Italian and in the worst Italian style, that in which brute force is substituted for art, that the ear of groundlings may be split.

In this direction too much of the effort of the Chicago organization tended. Little was left of the French repertoire and Gallic finesse which characterized its seasons when it first blossomed into fame. Miss Mary Garden and her pictorial art were once the idols of the Chicago Opera patrons. Titta Ruffo and the cyprian "voice like thunder" are now its contributions to the glorious idealism brought into the world by the spiritual exaltation of a great war.

The performance of Ambroise Thomas' "Hamlet" at the Lexington Theatre caused one of the most heartrending revelations of depraved taste that this city has had the misfortune to witness in many years. The theatre was packed and many were unable to obtain admission. Mr. Ruffo acted Hamlet in a manner which violated almost every canon of art and good taste. Hamlet was mad not only north-west, but southeast by south and west by north. It was not the wreck of a noble mind that we beheld, but the pitiable spectacle of a witless, gabbling or raving, as the mood required.

Mr. Ruffo talked and shouted when he felt like it. He occasionally abandoned all pretence of singing. When he did sing he exhibited an amazing series of exaggerations. His chief asset in Hamlet, as in "Pagliacci," was a tremendous and prolonged volume of tone on a high note. And this is what his shouting compatriots were to acclaim. When Mr. Ruffo shouted they shouted. It was a grand and inspiring contest between them to ascertain whether he could scream high tones more loudly than they could scream "bravi!"

In the general exhibitions of the power of sound Mr. Ruffo found an able competitor in Tito Schipa, whose tenor voice of prodigious strength and very little beauty. But beauty is something which the Italian opera adorer of this time estimates in foot pounds. It is not the quality of tone that excites his admiration but the force of it. Possibly we shall eventually have a scientific unit for the exact measurement of the values of this new type of vocal art. Certainly it will not be horse power. We may perhaps substitute for the word "horse" the name of a humbler beast of burden whose vocal abilities have acquired a certain notoriety in barnyard circles.

### Prima Donna's Misfortune.

Mme. Galli-Curci had the misfortune to be associated with two musical phonic artists for "Rigoletto." Her delicate tones and confident art were smothered. The one-time sensation of the town was a mere assistant to the clowns of the representation, a violin lost in the ranks of a brass band. She came and went and was heard with polite consideration. But the popular clamors were not for her. She could neither blast down the walls of Jericho with a trumpet nor blow up their foundations with explosions of vocal dynamite.

How long is the cultivated operagoer going to witness the degradation of the lyric art by the rule of a minority devoted to the right of the conception of singing in the consists of violence and loudness are not yet in the majority. They are like so many other minorities in that they make a great noise. Noise is their element. They dwell in it and create it when they hear it in order to hear more of it.

One thing is certain. Not even the Chicago Opera Company, which has apparently thrown to the winds most of its earlier pretensions to fine art, can continue to live by noise alone. The effect of the cultivation of a less elegant repertoire and the open invitation to operagoers of refined tastes to stay at home was manifested on more than one occasion by the number of uncoupled seats.

But if it were possible to conduct a season of opera on the level established by the methods of the shouters of vocal music, varied by an occasional exhibition of ballet, then the right kind of an opera company to engage would consist of two bands of derbies, one whirling and one howling.

### Mr. De Koven's Opera.

The operatic novelties of the Chicago season were by no means important. Mr. De Koven's "Rip Van Winkle" bore comparison with the others fairly well. Certainly Andre Messager's "Mme. Chrysanthe" is not likely ever to occupy the local stage again. The music reviewer of this newspaper confesses that the sole consideration accorded this fragile composition by some of his friends amazed him. But it is a sterile period, and the critical commentator sizes with avidity any one which promises to yield even a small amount of metal. The problem of making "low grade" once pay has long occupied human attention. But let it pass. It does not belong to the realm of art.

Ravel's French farces tickled the fancies of many and bored others to extinction. Those who understood the French text

operatic audiences is formed by the lyric interpretations offered to them. The thunders of applause for Jean de Reszke and his associates were just as great as those for Ruffo. The line of purchasers of admission tickets was just as long at every performance.

The great artist teaches the public the meaning of great art. The substitution of brute force for beauty was not demanded by any sudden change in public taste. But let operagoers be compelled for six months to hear only fine and beautiful singing and they would forget that there had ever been any other kind.

Allen McQuhae, tenor, will be the soloist at the Philharmonic Society's concert this afternoon in Carnegie Hall. The programme: Beethoven, overture, "Coriolanus"; aria, from "Christ on the Mount of Olives"; overture, "Le No. 2." List: Psalm No. 23, for tenor and orchestra, orchestral setting by Joseph Stravinsky; Wagner, "Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla"; overture, "Rienzi"; "Dreame"; List: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1.

The programme for the society's concert on Thursday evening, with Albert Spalding as soloist, is: Hadley, Symphony No. 2, "The Four Seasons," conducted by the composer; Delius, "Life's Dance"; Bruch, Scotch Fantasy for violin and orchestra; Tchaikovsky, Italian Capriccio; With Mr. Spalding as the soloist the society's programme for next Friday afternoon is: Beethoven, Symphony, "Eroica"; Goldmark, overture, "Prometheus Bound"; Saint-Saens, concerto, B minor, for violin and orchestra; Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1.

On Saturday evening, with Rudolph Gans as the soloist, the society will offer this programme: Symphony, "Pastorale"; concerto, B flat minor, piano and orchestra; overture, "Hilse."

Miss Marie Mikova will give her first piano recital here in the Princess Theatre this afternoon. The programme is: Bourée, Bach-Saint-Saens; Pastorale; Scarlatti, March from the "Ruins of Athens"; Beethoven-Rubinstein; Sonata, B flat minor, Chopin; Melody, D. Young; Nocturne, Campbell-Tipton; Pastoral, Delibes; Gnosienne, Satie; Rostessiana; Moszkowski; two polkas, Smetana; Polonaise, B. Major, Liszt.

Miss Edwina Behre at her first piano recital here in the Garrick Theatre tonight, will play Rameau's "The Hen," Beethoven's sonata, opus 81a, Schumann's "Scerbo from Childhood," Chopin's "The Boat," two intermezzi by Brahms and other pieces.

Maximilian Rose, Russian violinist, at his recital to-night in Carnegie Hall will play among other selections, Tartini's G minor sonata, Mendelssohn's concerto and Wieniawski's "Faust" fantasy.

At to-night's "opera concert" at the Metropolitan Opera House Rudolph Gans will play Grieg's piano concerto, A minor, and Liszt's "Petrarca Sonnetto," and Polonaise in E. Mme. Sundelius will sing the "Balletella" from "Pagliacci" and Mme. Delaunoy the Page Song from "The Huguenots." Louis d'Angelo will sing "The Briton," a new composition by Alma Brittain. The orchestra, under the direction of Richard Hageman, will play Goldmark's "In Spring Time" overture and Adolph Fink's "Jewish Rhapsody."

The John McCormack testimonial concert for the American Legion of New York county will be given in the Hippodrome this evening. The Chicago Opera Orchestra, with Marcel Chabrier as conductor and Miss Mary Garden and Mr. McCormack as soloists, will give the musical programme, and Gen. John J. Pershing will give an address. Miss McCormack will sing operatic arias, and Mr. McCormack will be heard in songs by Beethoven and songs. The first orchestral selection is an aria from Bach.

At the chamber music concert of the Music League of the People's Institute to-night at the Washington Irving High School, Sam Frank, leader, Sergio Kotlarsky and Max Kotlarsky, will play Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata for violin and piano, Leclair's duet for two violins and Schubert's A minor quartet for strings, opus 13, are the other works to be given.

Miss Olga Carrara, a young Italian soprano, will give her song recital, postponed from Feb. 15, to-morrow night.

Miss Helen Ware at her violin recital in Aeolian Hall next Friday afternoon will play a sonata by Beethoven, a E flat concerto and a group of pieces by herself.

Richard Buhlig will give his sixth piano recital in Aeolian Hall next Friday night.

Lucy Gates, soprano, will be the soloist at the symphony concert for young persons in Carnegie Hall next Saturday afternoon. She will sing Mozart's air, "Il re pastore," with flute obbligato played by Gustave Tiniot, and the Bell Song from "Lakme" by Delibes.

The orchestral subject will be devoted to illustrating percussion instruments. Mr. Damrosch, in his remarks, will show and explain the Egyptian sistrum, an instrument used probably 1500 B. C.



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## Mr. Gatti-Casazza Explains New Parsifal Scenery

"As the abandonment of the moving panorama in the first and third acts of our new production of 'Parsifal' has occasioned so much comment pro and con," said Giulio Gatti-Casazza, general manager of the Metropolitan Opera Company yesterday, "it may not be out of place for me to assure THE SUN AND NEW YORK HERALD readers that the suppression was due neither to caprice nor to a disregard of Wagnerian traditions. On the contrary, it is due to logical considerations."

"What," continued Mr. Gatti-Casazza, "was Wagner's purpose in employing a moving panorama?"

"His idea was to give the impression to the spectators that Parsifal and Kundry were walking through the forest all the way to the interior of the Temple of the Grail."

"To realize the effect pictorially Wagner, in cooperation with the famous theatrical machinist Brandt, conceived plans for an ingenious panorama unfolding itself in the direction opposite to that taken by Kundry and Parsifal."

"The scheme worked out splendidly on the mechanical and pictorial sides, but as an illusion it was a failure. The fact is, that when the rehearsals at Balthus began the panorama had hardly begun to move when it was seen that the two singing actors had to retire to the wings. This sudden disappearance of Parsifal and Kundry always occurred, both at Balthus and at the Metropolitan. Now, I ask you what use is there in having a moving panorama if one of the most important elements of the illusion sought to be produced immediately vanishes?"

"Several new modifications of and new experiments with the mechanism were tried after Wagner's death, but in spite of all efforts no satisfactory result ever was reached."

"However, as it was a question of an effect sought by Wagner himself, and as he was very set in his ideas, never being willing to yield, the moving panorama remained in the stage setting at Balthus, which was copied faithfully by Heinrich Conrad for the Metropolitan."

"Nevertheless it is a fact that when 'Parsifal' after its escape from its prison in Balthus, appeared in various other European theatres not one of these theatres thought of reproducing the moving panorama—not even the most orthodox theatres of Berlin and of Vienna, where I saw 'Parsifal' given without the panorama."

"Furthermore, I never have understood the reason for the peculiar attraction which the panorama effect had for Wagner, considering that the idea was not the creation of his own imagination. Some years before 'Parsifal' had its premiere at Balthus—that is, in 1883—I recall having seen ballets produced with moving panoramas, behind actors who remained in position. I also remember having myself owned a little theatre of marionettes which had a very nice moving scenic panorama from the operation of which I derived much childish amusement."

"Now, I say, when one hopes to realize a certain effect and instead makes a failure of it, for my part I think that the best thing to do is to get rid of it and rather seek an effect more rational, even if it be less ambitious."

"Now for our new Kilgusgard, regarding which there also has been more or less comment," continued Mr. Gatti-Casazza, "Frankly I recognize the fact that many of these criticisms have been justified—so much so that I may tell you that next season the garden will be changed."

"But you must not forget that there are great difficulties to overcome. All who have seen the garden at Balthus will remember perfectly that the famous garden was studied and restudied by the painter Ioukowski, who worked under the immediate supervision of Wagner himself, and who painted every inch of the scenery with his own hands. But Ioukowski only succeeded in composing and producing a garden which is the most baroque imaginable—the worst taste that ever has been seen on the theatrical stage."

"To paint a scenic garden with tropical vegetation which at the same time has a fascinating and poetic atmosphere is something veritably difficult!"

"As to the new scene of the Temple of the Holy Grail," continued Mr. Gatti-Casazza, "for which every one has had nothing but praise, it certainly is a masterpiece, and Joseph Urban alone, from the fact of having conceived and realized it, deserves absolute honor from having in the other case committed an artistic sin."

"Strange as it may seem to the layman, in spite of all the foresight and practical experience of those who concern themselves professionally with affairs of the theatre, they can and do make mistakes. Nothing, however, is more experimental than the staging of a spectacle, and no other business does one meet so many surprises."

"You want an example?" said Mr. Gatti-Casazza. "Here is one of the greatest. It is historic and apertains to 'Parsifal.' In July, 1881, at Balthus, at the rehearsals of 'Parsifal,' it was observed that in unfolding of the panorama in the first act required twice as much time as the music which was intended to accompany it. The same was the case with the panorama in the third act."

"Now it was not possible to reduce the panorama to the proportions demanded nor was it possible to cut out the panorama in the first act, as it was too intimately associated with the execution. (What I am telling you I find recorded in a volume by the eminent Italian critic Giuseppe de Pansa, who was present at the final rehearsal and first performance of 'Parsifal' in 1881.)"

"As a remedy Wagner made the orchestra repeat portions of the score and retarded the tempi sufficiently to allow the unfolding of the panorama to be completed, thus sacrificing the musical to the visual effect."

"On the other hand, the moving panorama in the third act was omitted and the orchestral part, which did not lend itself to 'repeats,' accompanying the farewell of Titurel was that season performed with the curtains closed."

"With regard to the new production of 'Parsifal' at the Metropolitan, the management, while it recognizes that there are defects which will be cured, nevertheless is conscious of having achieved a most important result in an opera house where the works of Wagner had been sung from time immemorial in the German language and by the best German artists it has succeeded in giving a performance in every respect most praiseworthy and in many respects even perfect. In the English language and with a company composed of heterogeneous elements, in part entirely unfamiliar with the Wagnerian style—it has succeeded in obtaining, especially in the scene of the temple, a musical atmosphere such as rarely have I been able to produce on the stage."

"This latter observation I never should have made were it not also the expression of opinion on the part of a great many intelligent persons who attended our 'Parsifal' the other day and who spontaneously thought it their duty to come and tell me."

"The satisfaction of the public is the first thing to be considered in the theatre. Mark you, I do not say the only thing; but certainly it is the first. Woe to the manager who does not keep this fact before him."

Churchill's last many luncheon, dinner and after theatre parties. Churchill's Colorful Cabaret is presented continually with slight interruptions for dancing. Among the entertainers are the Norris Sisters, dancers; Miss Grace Emerson, Oriental dancer; Henry and Lizzelle, Miss Gladys White and the Mendoza Dancers.

Answering the spirit of the day, Andre Bustanby, owner and manager of the Cafe des Beaux-Arts, at 80 West 40th street, has introduced two new features for dancers. The first is a reduction of 10 per cent. on all prices. The second innovation is tea from 4 to 6 o'clock, at which there is dancing. A shoppers' luncheon is served at noon.

John McCormack was at Thursday night's concert of the Rubinstein Club at the Waldorf-Astoria, and it was termed "McCormack's Night." A supper and dance followed the long and interesting programme, the tenor having fifteen listed numbers and giving fully as many encores.

"Cheer Up New York," the combination of skating and musical comedy in Thomas Healy's Golden Glades, continues to please seekers after entertainment. The performances are given nightly; the dinner show at 7:30 o'clock and the after theatre performance at 11:30. New features are being added weekly.

Miss Irene Franklin, comedienne, now in "Always You," has offered a silver cup as the prize in a Peabody one step contest to be held at the Terrace Garden Dance Palace on Tuesday night. The competition is open.

Ernest Ruman, leader of the McAlpin Grill Dance Orchestra, has written a fox trot called "Sunbeams," with lyrics by Gus Kahn.

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